

OBSERVATIONS
ON
AFFAIRS
IN
IRELAND
FROM THE
SETTLEMENT in 1691,
TO THE
PRESENT TIME.

By NICHOLAS LORD VISCOUNT TAAFFE.

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OBSERVATIONS

O N

AFFAIRS, &c.

THOUGH I had been called early into Germany, I yet, had more frequent occasions of being particularly acquainted with the state of affairs in my native country, than falls in the way of those, who through want of employment, or through religious differences, take their flight into foreign lands and never return. Before religion became a disqualification, my family distinguished itself early on behalf of the British crown, and had obtained those *national* honours, which are the rewards of *national* services. My ancestors distinguished themselves also, through the success of their negotiations, between *Britain* and several *German* courts; they have obtained ample possessions and dignities from the house of *Austria* and court of *Lorraine*; and they compounded so well with fortune, that the principles, which excluded them from serving in their native country, were no obstacle to their being useful to *Britain* in another, where their

influence was considerable, and where those principles were no disqualification. By blood I was the next in remainder to the earl of *Carlingford*, and had consequently the prospect of a large patrimonial succession open to me. The expectations of my youth were hereby raised, and much as I had been employed in military services, I did not omit keeping an eye to the state of affairs in my native country, as it was *there*, my expectations were in a considerable degree to be disappointed or gratified.

Were the knowledge I acquired personal to *myself only*, the public should not at this, nor at any time, be troubled on that account. But very considerable numbers of equally well affected subjects, being involved in the causes and consequences of what determined the fate of *my own* affairs in this country, I shall succinctly take a view of the state of things here, from the final settlement in sixteen hundred and ninety one, to the present time; omitting however every particular, but what relates to the penal laws passed within this period: the provocations given to such laws, and the effect, both immediate and remote, which they had on the true interests of the nation.

It is the best legacy I can leave behind me; and the only service which the established laws permit me, to render my native country. — Sequestered by my religion from my seat in parliament, and *stripped of most of the privileges* of an *Irish* peer; I leave this pledge of affection, to my king, to my country, and to our present free constitution; and I may still be useful, *if the time is come*, as I trust it is, when true information can dare encounter every favourite error, and when prejudices equally worthless

worthless and unfociable, are renounced in favour of maxims, which experience has shewn to be the Lessons of nature, and which alone can render nations happy.

My readers must not expect elegance of style in the account I am giving. Truth, in my opinion, requires no assistance from the ornament of words, but comes best recommended by its own native simplicity. The matter I have collected, has been digested by a friend, *under my own eye*; nor did I chuse him for elocution, but for his *fidelity*, in conveying *my thoughts*, in the plainness I dictated them. I shall, therefore, content myself with a bare recital of *facts*, and such judgements as naturally flow from them. They are facts of which I have been mostly an eye witness, and where this advantage failed me, I took care to be well informed. The acts of parliament, passed within the period I have prescribed to myself, shall be my principal guides, and with the reader, they shall be my vouchers; leaving him to the judgement which he will doubtless exercise, on the justness or weakness of my reasonings on the effects and consequences of those laws.

When the *Irish* submitted to king William's government in sixteen hundred and ninety one, they were reluctantly drawn into a measure which wisdom should make their choice, but which several incidents prevented their adopting, sooner than they have done it. That monarch engaged to preserve entire to the *Irish catholics*, all the *civil rights* and immunities they enjoyed under *Charles II.* —Such an engagement just in itself, was the more commendable, as it was founded *on the spirit*,
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of the revolution lately brought about, and grafted on ■ the principles of toleration, and civil liberty. It was an engagement which King *William* could never be persuaded to depart from, and it soon produced its natural consequences. The security he granted to religious dissenters of all denominations, restored industry, and plenty of all things; useful arts were introduced; the land was cultivated, and a fine island, reduced to a desert by the late war, soon assumed a new face. In fact, *Ireland* was never happier than under that monarch. He saw, though others could not, or would not see, that the *Irish Catholics* might, by kind treatment, be rendered as good subjects as the *Catholics in Holland*, who served him faithfully, and fought under him against *King James*.

Neither the vicinity of King *James* who still had friends in the kingdoms he abdicated, nor the power of *Lewis XIV.* who maintained an army of *Irish*, who followed the fortune of that prince, could influence King *William* to alter his conduct towards the Catholics, who submitted to his government. He trusted to their engagements with him, and to the security he gave them: and their steady adherence to those engagements, brought him daily proofs, that his confidence was well placed.

This conduct of affairs, so immediately subsequent to a great revolution, ought not to be slightly passed over, without a few reflections. Numbers of those who followed the fortune of the late King *James*, were still alive. The attainders and forfeitures, consequent of their resistance and flight, rankled in the breasts of those unhappy men. The
victories

victories of *Lewis XIV.* in the war of that time, flattered them in the expectation of returning into their native country, and overturning the establishment. They had some retainers and friends ready to join them on any invasion, a set of people of all religions, who had nothing to lose, and something to expect in the convulsions of government. Then, if *ever*, King *William* was in danger from subjects he so lately reduced by his arms. The appearances of it were never stronger; but that wise Prince trusted to the security he gave. He interested the people, in the subjection he extorted from them by the force of his arms, and they, *on their part*, preferred the stability granted to their properties, to the uncertainties of a new war, or the return of King *James*, who possibly could give no such stability: such were the principles and effects of King *William's* policy; but that policy died along with him.

Anne, the daughter of the late King *James*, succeeded to King *William*.—The dangers which through his whole reign surrounded *him*, were removed from *her*. The bulk of the people were reconciled to the late revolution. She entered into the confederate war against *France*, and conducted it victoriously to the end. All the efforts of that nation to disturb the domestic repose of her subjects, were defeated by the wisdom of her councils, and superiority of her fleets. The partizans of the late King *James* at home and abroad, were reduced in their numbers by death; and every event of the time, reduced the survivors to the state of insignificance, which weakness adds to despair.

Thus

Thus we see, that not only the reality, but the appearance of danger to the government were removed : and yet, what was the consequence ?— By a *strange inversion* of things, our apprehensions *encreased*, as *every cause* of apprehension *vanished*. The nation was alarmed anew. Old animosities have been revived, fresh panics were infused.— The *Irish Catholics* who embarked their whole fortune on the same bottom with the revolution, and whose only interest it was, that the state bark should glide smoothly, were no longer to be trusted ; and a maxim hath been established, that this state vessel could not be safe, while such men had any unperishable goods on board. It was deemed that the security and self-interest, which is the support of every government, could not be a rule to go by, when applied *to them*.—To distress their minds, damp their industry, and render their property precarious, was deemed sound policy. This was the favourite system, opposed to that adopted by King *William* ; and conformably to this system it was, that Queen *Anne* was prevailed upon to annihilate the security he gave, and revoke the public faith, pledged to those Catholics, as the price of their submission at *Limerick*, in sixteen hundred and ninety one.

When Queen *Anne* gave her royal assent to the legal incapacities and penalties laid on the *Irish Catholics*, they formed more than two thirds of the nation ; but in a situation however, which rendered labor and industry absolutely necessary to their existence. Under so northern and unsteady a climate as ours, this necessity had demands on public encouragement, to lighten the burthens
imposed

imposed by nature. Any additional weight laid on in such a case, renders the bearer uneasy and listless, and if it be great, he either sinks under it or flies from it.—What therefore could induce to to the necessity of reducing our Catholic labourers, farmers and manufacturers to this alternative?—What advantages; what honor hath this nation acquired by tying up the hands of a million of people, *from co-operating with the public, in the public service?*

It was not pretended *at that time*, that the *Irish Catholics*, were restless or disobedient under the government. On the contrary, it has been acknowledged that their visible conduct was unexceptionable; and time hath proved also, that they merited and improved the repose King *William* gave them.—This conduct however served them in no stead. New burthens were laid on them, from time to time, and we can have but one solution for such a problem in politics; the danger of the public was sounded high, at the time in question; and the legislature were induced to think, that constitutional security to such numbers, infected with the most virulent principles, would hazard the safety of the establishment; under such apprehensions, no wise legislature can be inactive or careless. But it might happen in this instance, as in many other instances in the history of mankind, that greater cautions were used than the public good could bear.—It might not be sufficiently adverted to, that the proofs of civil delinquency, were not intire and complete enough to justify our apprehensions.—That possibly these objects of popular odium might be charged with principles they detested, and that very probably, they professed

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the same principles with their brethren in *Holland* and *Germany*, who were not only tolerated but rewarded for their civil orthodoxy.

Such considerations did not take place at the time we refer to. In Queen *Anne's* reign it was pressed home on the heads and hearts of our *protestant fellow subjects*, that no faith was to be reposed in the peaceful conduct or *avowed* principles of *Irish catholics*, that the *latent* and *real* principles of these men, justified perjury in religion, and destruction to every civil government, wherein they had not the lead.—Indeed the accusations on this head, have been numberless. Volumes of printed books are full of them and every species of civil iniquity, (from which no party of mankind is absolutely exempt) hath been charged on the *catholic religion*, as the womb of all.—All this, I say, has been advanced, and is advanced perseverantly to this day, and would to God, it was from simple ignorance, (for that is reclaimable) and not from an aversion to knowledge, in those instances, particularly where knowledge proves shocking to our prejudices.

This is a part of my subject, not a deviation from it: unless the proofs of the wickedness ascribed to the *civil principles* of catholics, be intire and complete, much injury may be done to the public, as well as to individuals, from the mistake of these principles. Other evidences should be called in, and listened to patiently, either to confirm or dissipate our apprehensions.—They are at hand, and ought to be heard.—Through *this attention*, the infirmity of our human nature would be cured or guarded against. We would ourselves have the merit of opening

opening the door to knowledge, a very unwelcome guest, when it forces its way in.

After all our researches concerning religion and government within the present century, it is to me amazing, as it will amaze posterity, that we should forego all the knowledge derivable from such inquiries, and admit *other protestant nations* to get the start of us, in resigning every species of *superstitious policy* to the public interest.—In the protestant states of *Germany* the public interest is carried on by the co-operation of all hands, thro' an agreement *in the same summary of civil principles*: Things in themselves easily ascertained, and not subject to the controversies about dogmatical points of faith, or the mysteries attending it. In Ireland, in Queen *Anne's* reign I mean, it was deemed sound policy, to abridge the immunities granted by King *William* to the catholics, to lessen their connexion with their native country, and lay the exercise of their religion under such restrictions, as virtually amounted to a prohibition. By the laws passed in that reign, they are interdicted to realize the produce of their industry, under the penalty of forfeiture; they are also excluded, under alike penalties, from leasehold Interests except for thirty one years only, but this under considerable restrictions from the danger of trusting any durable property to such hands. The tenure is thus confined to a few years, and lest that should be too much, it has been enacted, that in case of their having more than a third penny profit in it, such tenure shall be forfeited to the sole advantage of *the first protestant discoverer*.

Thus are informers set on the watch, benefiting of a right by law, where nature gives none; and

what still may be more aggravating ; a son conforming to the religion established, is, by law, invested with a power over his father's inheritance, making that father, but a bare tenant for life, under great restrictions ; and bringing his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave !——Not only purchased estates in land, but small tenements, even houses are discoverable by law, and given to the first protestant informer.——Nay, a horse of five pounds value, in the hands of a catholic, may upon legal information be carried away from the owner.——Such were the encouragements then given, and such the incentives interposed, to *excite* the industry, *win* the affections, and *insure* the connexion of this devoted people.

Were I to recite in this place the legal incapacities and penalties laid on the *Irish* catholics, through the whole reign of Queen *Anne*, I should wear out the readers patience, and my own, before half my task could be over. I refer to the statute Books. I will only observe here, that those penalties and interdicts had their natural effects in the dispeopling greatly the three fine provinces, wherein the bulk of catholics reside. They took their effect in putting a stop to the cultivation began in *King William's* reign : —— No sooner were the catholics excluded from durable and profitable tenures, than they commenced graziers, and laid aside agriculture: they ceased from draining or enclosing their farms, and building good houses, as occupations unsuited to the new post assigned them in our national œconomy.——They fell to wasting the lands, they were virtually forbid to cultivate, the business of pasturage being compatible with such a conduct and requiring also, little industry and still less labour in the management.——This business moreover, brings quick
returns

returns in money, and tho' its profits be smaller, than those arising from agriculture, yet they are more immediate, and much better adapted to the condition of men, who are confined to a fugitive property, which can so readily be transferred from one country to another.——This pastoral occupation also, eludes the vigilance of our present race of informers, as the difficulty of ascertaining a grazier's profits is considerable, and as the proofs of his enjoying more than a third penny profit, can not so easily be made clear in our courts of law. The keeping the lands waste also, prevents, in a great degree, leases in reversion, what protestants only are qualified to take, and what (by the small temptation to such reversions) gives the present occupant, the best title to a future renewal. —— This sort of self-defence, in keeping the lands uncultivated, had the further consequence, of expelling that most useful body of people, called *Yeomanry* in *England*, and which we denominated *Sculoags* in *Ireland*. Communities of industrious house-keepers, who in my own time, herded together in large villages, and cultivated the lands every where, till as leases expired, some rich grazier, negotiating privately with a sum of ready money, took these lands over their heads. —— This is a fact well known. The *Sculoag* race, that great nursery of labourers and manufacturers, has been broke and dispersed in every quarter; and we have nothing in lieu, but those most miserable wretches on earth, the *Cottagers*; naked slaves, who labour without food, and live while they can, without houses or covering, under the lash of merciless and relentless task masters!

The catholics, as we have seen, keep their farms in a bad plight, as they are excluded, *by law*, from durable

durable and profitable tenures, and they derive *some advantage* from a source, which brings *infinite mischief to the nation*.—Agriculture the mother of population, the nurse of every useful art, the support of commerce, is exchanged in *Ireland*, for pasturage the parent of inconsequence, and the purveyor of national indigence ! an occupation (if we may call it one) which occasions frequent returns of famine, drains the kingdom of its specie, and occasions the emigration of numbers, who for want of employment at home, are yearly on the wing !—This is the price we pay for groundless panics, which sober reflexion despises, and which, *King William did despise*.

It may be urged, that all this labour might be spared, that tho' the facts be fairly recited, and my reasonings on the consequences, just in a *general sense* ; yet, that “ we can not pay too much for the internal peace, and public security of our country : That *no composition* for the public safety can be made with men who are our enemies *by principle*, and that the sufferings of the nation on *their* account, must be borne, till they gradually fall off as the *rotten branches of the community*, or exchange their religious principles, for those established by law.”

To this it has been already answered, that such reasoning is founded on a *supposed* fact, which without clear and incontestible proof, *recoils upon itself*. To prove *Irish catholics*, irreclaimable enemies to this protestant government, it will be necessary to shew that they profess different principles (religious and civil) from their brethren in *Holland* ; from those who are endowed with so many civil immunities in his present majesty's *German* dominions, or those
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under his *Prussian* majesty, in the electorate of *Brandenburgh*. Without such a proof, the charge against *Irish catholics* is unfair; it is shameful also: and if it be both, it is full time to lay aside groundless apprehensions, and recur to those judgments of nature which sooner or latter, must blot out the comments of opinion, and impositions of prejudice.

Let us for once, and in God's name, commit a little violence on our favourite pre-occupations, and listen to the voice of nature, and of truth. — *Catholics* may doubtless become rebellious to *protestant* princes; they have, at times proved rebellious to catholic princes: *But their religion forbids such public iniquity under the severest penalties.* This is that most important truth for which I bespeak the closest attention of the public, and for which chiefly, I have been at the pain of giving it this trouble. — In vain will it be to object, that some popes and some Roman doctors have run counter to this doctrine. — If they have done so, the fact will only prove that such popes, and such casuists have followed the *Lesbian rule*; mistakenly bringing their holy religion to countenance their worldly policy, instead of reconciling that policy with their religion. — It is a species of *civil superstition* to view such *occasional* deviations, in any other light; or think otherwise on this head. — It is such a *civil superstition*, as the protestant states of *Germany* have long since got rid of, and can not be retained in *Ireland*, without the manifest disadvantages it must ever drag along with it.

I have asserted, and can not repeat it too often, that the catholic religion forbids (under the severest penalties) public rebellion, or private treachery towards *this* or *any* government, a gunpowder plot in
England.

England, or *Irish* massacre in *Ireland*, doth not invalidate the eternal obligation of that religious prohibition.—If our human nature at times, bursts the bounds, this prohibition prescribes; what can be inferred, but that faction and violence prevail? Shall *local* incidents, and old pretensions bearing impressions of their own, and marked with colours peculiar to themselves, affect the present settled times, wherein no dispute about power or property exists or can exist?—Shall the present innocent suffer, because their ancestors of another age were guilty? Nay, shall the public be kept in alarm, and (what is much worse) kept in a state of langour, indigence and animosity, because the Catholics of former times, have fallen into civil iniquities no way countenanced by their religion?

The immunities and security granted to the *Roman Catholics*, on the surrender of *Limerick*, have been mentioned; the good consequences of King *William's* adherence to the articles there signed, and the effects of *Queen Anne's*, setting them aside, have been mentioned also:—on the demise of that Princess; a Prince ascended the throne; who happily endowed by nature, wise by experience, and bred up in the principles of toleration, diffused the felicities of good government equally among his *German* subjects, *Protestant and Catholic*. On his accession to the *British* crown, he could not alter any law then in force. There was therefore but one remedy left for royal compassion to apply, in his newly acquired kingdoms, where *German toleration* found no ingress. He relaxed, as much as possible, the penalties annexed to the exercise of the Catholic worship.—From the persuasion he had, that the *Irish* Catholics professed no ~~religion~~ civil principles

principles, different from *those of his German subjects*, he permitted them to worship God in the way they deemed most acceptable to him.

George II. trod in the same steps of his royal father, the same spirit of toleration pervaded every act of his administration. He knew that, "Religion good or bad is the best security we can have for the probity of men;" and that the ideal problems for justifying persecution, however, they may tend to the advantage of a few individuals, have never a good effect relatively to the public happiness, or private morals of mankind; that denying the use, by reasoning from the abuse of things, is injurious as well as unfair, that men occasionally warped from their duty, by the heats of enthusiasm, by the mistakes of zeal, and by local circumstances, do naturally return to that duty, when the clouds of ignorance or folly are dissipated, and when the lights of religion and nature combined, are let in on the mind; and farther, that the wholesome severities which prevent public disturbances, ought to be calculated so, as never to produce them.

To this knowledge, and to the feelings, of his royal breast, the Catholics of *Ireland*, owe the repose they enjoyed through the whole course of *George II.*'s reign. That great monarch graciously received the public assurances they gave him of their obedience and fidelity to his government. From these professions of loyalty they were not known to depart, either during the flames of rebellion, or in the sunshine of public tranquillity. — Let religious hatred, the parent of distrust and malevolence, now come forward! — Let it say on
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its own blind authority, that this good conduct of the *Irish Catholics*, was due more to the want of power, than of willingness to rebel: That they only impiously dissembled with a monarch, who protected them, as far as they could be protected, from the feverities of the law; and that gratitude had as little hold of such men, as any principle favorable to the present constitution!—I have, to my great concern, been an ear witness of this righteous sentence, wherein we find *the spirit and true features of its parent*.—That principle, I mean, which strips every merit of its reward, and finds the most detestible motives, lurking behind the most irreprehensible actions.

It hath been averred, that when *M. Conflans* had instructions for making a descent on the western coast of *Ireland*; the *Irish Catholics* had early intelligence of the design, and entered into engagements for joining the enemies of their king and country. But glaring facts;—facts of the greatest notoriety, contradict this averment.—What a few desperate men might hope from such an event, and what they would have done in consequence of its taking place, is *here out of the question*.—Without any prejudice, to the cause I have undertaken, I may safely grant, that men of that character would have acted the part *here*, which they have played in all ages and countries; far from running to save the house, *they would hasten to plunder it when on fire*.—But the catholics of *Ireland* had an interest *in the safety*, not *in the destruction* of their country, and on the earliest alarm of an invasion, adopted immediately, the only measure proper for them to take.—From every quarter where they had any weight

or property, they gave the most solemn assurances of their affection to the government. I refer to their addressees, to his majesty's vice-roy on that occasion, and will only observe, that the sensible address of the *Roman Catholics* of *Dublin*, gave so much satisfaction to the lord lieutenant, that he graciously gave the most authentic proofs of it* in a letter to the speaker of the house of commons:—I need not express, what joy such a testimony of confidence (given in so critical a conjuncture) gave all the catholics in the kingdom.

From the surrender of *Limerick*, in sixteen hundred and ninety one, to the demise of his late majesty, I have, I trust, given a satisfactory, tho' brief, account of the conduct of the *Roman Catholics* of this kingdom, and of the different treatment they received in the reigns of king *William* and queen *Anne*.—On the accession of his present majesty, they have renewed their assurances of fidelity and loyalty.—The Insurrection of some of the cottagers, in a few counties of *Munster*, is no exception to the duty they owe, and pay to their sovereign; nor is it fair to reproach them with the madness of a rout of peasants, wearied with life, and desperate from invincible poverty. The whole body of *Roman Catholics*, however, have been reproached, and are, in some degree, reproached still on this account.—It has turned out a very serious and tragical affair, and had it not proved so, it would be cause of mirth to consider, how keen the appetite for *Popish plots* must have

* Dated from Dublin-Castle December 10, 1759.
See the Appendix.

have been, which fed upon the idea, that *France*, on the conclusion of a treaty of peace with *Britain*, and evidently interested in the temporary observance of it, should immediately employ here, the prevailing plenipotentiaries of money, arms, and officers, to conclude another private treaty with the *Munster* rabble, and all this with the view of exciting a *Popish massacre* and rebellion thro' every quarter of this kingdom!—Such is the idea that has been propagated, and so fillily have some played their game, that they admitted every body, to look into their hands.—It is happy that they did so.——Others were less to be blamed for being seduced to think, like SCRUB in the play, that there *must* be a plot, because *they knew nothing about it*. But men of good sense, the friends of their country and of virtue, went upon surer grounds, shewed no unwillingness to be well informed, and are now, very successfully, pushing this affair into * daylight. In and out of parliament they are doing good; and may their country receive the full benefit of their moderation and patriotism.

The *Irish Catholics* easily foresaw, that the disorders of the *Munster* levellers would affect them, and on the first rising of that mob, addressed the earl of *Hallifax*, then in the government, with the strongest assurances of their allegiance to his majesty. The superiors of the catholic clergy in that province, were at the same time edifyingly active in pressing the duty of obedience and loyalty on their people. This is well known.

(*) A candid inquiry on this subject is now in the press and will speedily be published; to that I refer.

known. He of *Waterford* exerted himself, by giving the government the best and earliest intelligence he could get, of the intentions and motions of those miscreants; ——— He of *Ossory* distinguished himself also, by excellent instructions (published in the public papers) for the civil conduct of the people under his care. They issued excommunications, and denounced, in vain, the most tremendous censures of the church against the incorrigible and obstinate. ——— Such I say, hath been the conduct of the *catholic clergy*; and, in truth, danger to our civil government is not owing to their influence, but to the want of it, in such instances as this before us. ——— Their influence operates only on those who approach the communion, and who are (God be thanked) the majority: it cannot reach the reprobates who fly from their confessionals, and despise their censures, as much as their exhortations. For such reprobates therefore, they are not accountable. In every other respect relative to their *civil duty*, they are highly commendable. Through every quarter of the kingdom, they press the obligation of fidelity to the present government, on the people under their care. * They have from their altars prayed for the present royal family, and in these acts, the clergy of the capital city have particularly distinguished themselves. ——— Such men, I repeat it, do infinite good. ——— They pursue and detect vice in its most hidden recesses, and produce the great effects of rewards and punishments, in instances, where human laws are either silent or ineffectual. ——— Lenity of government

* See the appendix number I.

vernment has been extended to them very deservedly, and it will set the spirit of intolerance hard, to discover *any one good*, that can accrue to the public from vilifying their characters, or letting the penalties of the laws loose against them.

The *Irish Roman Catholics*, clergy and layety, have no *civil guilt* to answer for; and if they have not, let us lay hand on our hearts, and confess, that *civil punishment* without a *civil crime*, is the very essence of intolerance.——Let us then, no longer seduce our selves, but extract from religious division, all the good it could ever bear.——Let us consider that it has been permitted by God, for the exercise of our patience, of our humility, and of our forbearance with one another.——Let us not admit it to be any longer *our punishment*, by producing no other fruit in these islands, but *spiritual calumny*, and animosity its *pestilent concomitant*.——We have light up a great fire, and fed it too long with oil.——Let us make an effort, and throw *cold water on the flames*——Like our *German neighbours*, the protestant states of *Lower Saxony* and *Brandenbourg*, let us charge no *civil crimes* on those men but what are fairly deducible from their avowed principles, and the general tenor of their actions, consequent of them.——In a word, as *religious union* is a happiness not likely to be attained, let us compound with things, and make no difficulty of admitting the possibility, that *protestants* and *roman catholics* may be made as unanimous, in *one summary of civil faith*, through these kingdoms, as they are known to be, under the *protestant governments* I have mentioned.

I have drawn up this short state of affairs in *Ireland*, for seventy five years past, with the honest intention of opening my countrymens, eyes, so long and so fatally closed up, from the view of their immediate and unalterable interests.—Before I end, I deem it proper to touch again on a point slightly handled above, because it is of the *highest* importance, for deciding *at once* and *for ever*, the merits of a prejudice, which tho' discarded by *experimental* knowledge, in the *protestant countries* I have known abroad, yet prevails still here at home, in its full and *obnoxious* force.—It is said of the catholics in *Britain* and *Ireland* that, “they are warranted by
 “*papal dispensations to hold up one set of principles*
 “*to the public, and retain another for their pri-*
 “*vate conscience; the one avowed, only to deceive;*
 “*the other concealed, only to destroy.*”—This is a hard charge.—But where are these papal dispensations, and these destroying creeds of private conscience to be found?—Let it be answered ingenuously and honestly.—They are to be found in the libraries of *British controversialists*, in monthly magazines, in weekly journals, and in the mouths of public orators, who are either ignorant of the truth, or have an interest separate from it.—The catholics renounce, and they detest also, such dispensations and creeds.—They are *the coinage* of base materials, and every wise man will leave it *on the hands of the coiners*, till they provide *better metal*, and learn to make *honest* payments.

Let such as too fatally resign their judgments, without examination, rouse and recall on the
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present occasion, the prerogative of *judging for themselves*, and consider, whether *common honesty* would not loath the detestable doctrine we have mentioned, in any country; and whether *common sense* would not renounce it in our own?—In our own, I say, where great legal penalties are incurred for professing the religion of *Rome*, and where the benefits of the civil constitution are conferred on those who renounce it for the religion established by law?—Whether catholics would profess *openly*, what they *suffer for*, or forego the great advantages offered them, if they were tolerated, *to dissemble their principles*? Whether their *open* profession of a religion, which offers them no advantage, but what is *merely spiritual*; which renders their persons *odious*, and their worldly property *precarious*; be not equal to the most *positive* proof, that they have no dispensations for *duplicity and perjury*?—Whether the public would not be benefited, or at worse *undecieved*, by taking those people for *what they really are*?—Whether that public may not be wronged, and sacred truth violated, by taking them *for what they are not*?—Whether the taking them for *what they are not* (Since *Queen Anne's* accession) had not the consequence of perpetuating unrelenting animosity, of multiplying legal incapacities, and preventing public prosperity, so far as it could be affected by legal restraints on so numerous a body of people?

The reducing such numbers to the necessity of leading a pastoral life, the decay of houses, improvements and plantations, *where they reside*; the inconnexion and emigration of many; the languor occasioned by insecurity; the despair of all!—Such things we see—But is there no remedy? or

is the cure of the distemper, so long since applied, by the *electors of Hanover and Brandenburg*, impossible in our case?—*are Irish catholics alone irreclaimable?*

Some men of sense, indeed, who wish well to their country, have proposed, to *mitigate* the rigor of some penal laws, and for preventing the great drains of our people, *have proposed* to admit the catholics to take a permanent property in our uncultivated wastes:—Those large and useless tracts, offensive to the eye, reproachful to our industry, and noxious to the health of the inhabitants in their present state.—But no attention was given to this proposal, tho' it be evident, that the wealth and revenue of the kingdom would receive a great increase from the execution of *such a scheme*; and prove *the best security on earth*, for the connexion and good behaviour of the people, *intended to be benefited by it*.

It hath been *likewise proposed*, in heads of a bill brought into the house of commons, to grant catholics some stable security, besides a personal and precarious one, for the sums of money they might lend out at legal interest.—Even this favour was refused, tho' many worthy and able members voted for it; and though many without doors, could hardly conceive how the public could be injured by *any* effectual law, for obliging individuals, in such pecuniary contracts, to fulfil their engagements with one another.

After all; it is not to *be denied*, but *at all times* to be maintained, that penal laws are absolutely necessary in every country, particularly, where the civil constitution is exposed to danger, from restless men, whose principles, civil and religious, lead to

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the overthrow of the established government.—In such a case, the common wealth must be preserved, however it may be affected by the restraints and incapacities laid on the industry and property of such men. But in this, as in other cases of such importance, mistakes are fatal: The public interest in some instances resembling a sickly body, which requires skilful attention through the various stages of the disorder. Remedies *once* absolutely necessary, may become mortal by *constant* application. When the fever is over, such remedies should be suspended; cordials and restoratives should be administered.—Our political fever, relative to power and property, hath been long over. It is near eighty years since a new settlement hath been made. All are now *apparently reconciled to it*, most *are really so*, and such, *as are not*, may be detected, by putting them to the *test of their civil principles*, such as may be *sufficient for quieting the fears of the public* on their account.

Such a *civil test*, the catholics of *Ireland* have given formerly: and *King William* was satisfied with it.—Such a test they are ready to give, *at the present time*, and we must have the *stronger conviction* of their *sincerity*, as the principles of their religion press the *obligation of such a duty upon them*.

“ They are ready, when called upon, to profess
 “ all civil obedience to his present majesty.—To
 “ renounce the pope’s supremacy, relatively to any
 “ temporal authority or jurisdiction within these
 “ realms; and to oppose to their utmost him, or
 “ any other prince or person, who should make any
 “ attempt upon his majesty’s crown, authority, or
 “ dignity.—That they renounce also, any papal
 “ dispensations from the discharge of these duties,
 “ and

“ and abhor the damnable crimes of perjury, mental evasions, and all equivocations in so religious
 “ and solemn a test of their loyalty.”

Such a test, is undoubtedly, equal to the importance of its object; and should any *Irish catholic* refuse to give it, it is against *such* a delinquent, and *such alone*, that our penal laws should operate in their full force.—By *such a tryal of principle*, the government would be in possession of the mighty advantage of making *an intire separation*, between its *friends* and *enemies*; nor would it be a moment in danger of committing any mistake, in the distribution of rewards and punishments, these mighty sanctions which form the strength, and secure the stability, of every *civil* establishment.

While the *Irish catholics* are at present, and long have been in the disposition, of giving government *such a test* of their loyalty as is here set down; it can be no fault of theirs, if *this disposition* be not improved to the advantage, as well as quiet of the public, now so needlessly, and indeed so strangely alarmed on their account. Thro’ this period of near eighty years, they have paid a long quarantine of political health; and if all this doth not intitle them to come on the shore of common safety, yet their conduct, surely, gives them some right to be considered as guiltless men!

The quiet they have obtained, nay their existence in this land of their birth, they owe to the compassion and lenity of government towards them, ever since the accession of his present majesty’s great grand father to the throne of these realms.—With great sensibility, and with great gratitude they acknowledge it. They see with interested gladness his
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throne established on as firm foundations *as the hands and hearts of men can lay*, and good subjects of all denominations, *undeniably*, interested in the support of it.

Toleration, the known and exerted principle of his majesty's royal house, has taken its proper and full effect in those parts of his dominions, where the royal hand is not restrained by antecedent laws. Such a principle is the impregnable fort into which *all* parties enter for common safety, and *wherein alone* the *weak* can find any shelter. Intolerance on the other hand, may be likened to the house of calamity, wherein suspicion governs, and into which peace never enters.—In that habitation suspicion *finds crimes* without foundation or reality, and *criminals consequently*, in the abundance it chuses.—In such a house innocent men, but obnoxious to law, may sojourn.—Sooner or later they must fly from it!

Let *North America*, be the mirror to reflect the benign face of universal indulgence to conscience: that monitor *within*, which when it suggests our proper duty as members of the community, *ought to remain uncontrolled from all human restraints*.—In that part of the world, so lately conquered by his majesty's arms, peace and order join their hands. The Catholics there, tho' habituated to a Catholic government, have reconciled themselves to the government of a Protestant monarch, who permits them to worship God, *in their own way*, and abridges them of *no civil privileges*, for so doing.—What have *Irish Catholics*, born under the present establishment, and ever obedient under it; what I say, have such men done, or what *civil* guilt can be produced against them, to distinguish

guish their case, from that of their brethren in Canada?

Wherever the spirit of intolerance prevails, it spreads *immediate* evils about itself, and sows the seeds of many more. In *Germany*, this spirit hath been happily dispossessed. *There*, no subject forfeits the *civil rights* of the community, because he dissents from the established mode of worship.— In most of the states of which that great empire is composed, it could hardly be conceived, that *the alternative of liberty or slavery*, should be the lot of any citizen, just as he believed or rejected this or that set of religious principles: No more than *civil orthodoxy*, is required in those countries; and the deviation from that, *and that alone*, is penal. By this policy, (adopted among the Catholic and Protestant states,) *civil* rewards and punishments are directed to their *proper objects*, and the great mischief of exposing men to the danger of hypocrisy, or infidelity, *from insincere conversions*, is avoided. In a word, religious hatred is confined to private breasts, and the rights of conscience are preserved inviolate.— The house of *Austria* in particular, hath in my own time, derived inexhaustible strength from this measure.— It is a measure, that has been invariably pursued, by the emperor *Charles* the VI. and her apostolic majesty (the heirs of his wisdom and virtues, as well as of his kingdoms) has reaped such mighty advantages from it, that further arguments in favour of toleration, would be but a waste of words, after setting before our eyes, the effects it had on that great queen's affairs, in the day of her distress. Her moderation, and the equable conduct she held, won the affecti-
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ons of her Protestant subjects, and the resentment of the wrongs she sustained, armed all *Hungary* in her cause. By reigning thus in the hearts of her subjects, she triumphed over her enemies, and this she owed in a great degree to her *not* requiring conformity to her *own* religion, as the *only* qualification for enjoying the *civil rights*, which her Protestant subjects possess in common, with the Catholics.—These facts I have collected, for the information of my countrymen, and I heartily wish, they may edify by them. They are facts of which I have been long an eye-witness, and I may presume upon obtaining more credit from readers of all persuasions, than a legion of mercenary pamphleteers, who write to please a party, and pick up, as they propagate any falsehood, for that end.

The Roman Catholic religion has been long established in the world: Let us admit hypothetically, and to put the case as strong as possible, that this religion is a compound of idolatry and superstition; yet is that alone a sufficient warrant for persecution or prosecution? Involuntary error, which includes no *civil evil* to the public, is not the proper object of pains and penalties. It is only when the religious error affects the peace of civil society, that civil incapacities are justifiable; and to shew that *Irish* Catholics are in this light culpable, it will be necessary to prove that they maintain principles different from those of their brethren in *Germany*.—I have touched on this matter before, and it is attended with pain, to consider, that it can not be inculcated too often?

In the present short representation, I had no other view, but the good of my king and country. If I have offered any one good argument in favor of either, the trouble I have taken is amply compensated, and I thought the present task, weakly as I have executed it, the more incumbent on me, as others of better abilities have declined it. With the integrity of my intentions, and the deference I owe to every legal authority as the appointment of God, I do not fear to give offence.—In the access I had the honour of having, to his late majesty of glorious memory, he very graciously accepted from me, the assurances I gave him of the loyalty and obedience of his *Irish Catholic subjects*, in the time of an open rebellion.—The same assurances I repeated to his majesty's vice-roys, and other principal persons in authority in this kingdom.—And I flatter myself that I did not thoroughly labor in vain.—I endeavoured to remove some prejudices, which could never find place in the breasts of those I applied to, if they were not owing to mistakes and misinformations.—To remove mistakes which may affect the good and the peace of our country, is every man's duty, who has been *so well informed*, as I have been.—The rest falls properly under the consideration of the legislature.

Let me conjure my fellow subjects, the *British* and *Irish Catholics*, to continue steady in that loyalty, that subserviency to the ruling powers, which their religion prescribes: grateful to the sovereign who *protects* them; patient and resigned under the laws which *punish* them.—Let their *civil conduct*, like their *civil principles* be such, as every government

ment must approve, and which our own legislature may (possibly) one day reward.—Should it however be deemed expedient, to continue the burthens they lie under, let them consider their sufferings as *remedies*, not as *evils*;—as the preventives of crimes on the one hand, and as the punishment of their sins on the other.—In a state of suffering, christians often fill their proper post, and of that post self-denial is the outguard.—A state of prosperity, is the state of danger, often as *fatal*, as it is flattering.—Let us not, therefore, lose the merit of the sacrifice we make; that of *worldly advantages*, the bitterest acquisitions on earth, should we acquire them by dissimulation, or in other words, by the renunciation of principles, which are the best tests of human probity.—Sincerity, insulted and punished sincerity, is a source of comfort in the world we inhabit: In a better state, we place our hope in a higher, nay in an eternal reward.—If we act in a manner unworthy of this hope, *we are undone*: we lose the merit of our sufferings, and thus criminal towards our God, *how can we presume on favors from the governors which he hath set over us?*

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APPENDIX.

A P P E N D I X.

Numb. I.

EXHORTATION of the Roman catholic clergy of Dublin, read from their Altars on the second of October, 1757.

[Taken from the Dublin Journal of October 4, 1757]

IT is now time christians, that you return your most grateful thanks to the Almighty God, who after visiting you with a scarcity, which approached near unto a famine, has been graciously pleased like a merciful father to hear your prayers and feed you with a plentiful harvest; nor ought you to forget those kind benefactors, who in the severest times, mindful only of the public good, generously bestowed, without any distinction of persons, those large charities, by which thousands were preserved who otherwise must have miserably perished the victims of hunger and poverty. We ought especially to be most earnest in our thanks to the chief governors and magistrates of the kingdom, and of this city in particular, who on this occasion proved the fathers and saviours of the nation.

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But as we have not a more effectual method of shewing our acknowledgements to our temporal governors, than by an humble, peaceful, and obedient behaviour, as hitherto, we earnestly exhort you to continue in the same happy and christian dispositions, and thus by degrees you will entirely efface in their minds those evil impressions which have been conceived so much to our prejudice, and industriously propagated by our enemies. A series of more than sixty years, spent with a pious resignation under the hardships of very severe penal laws, and with the greatest thankfulness for the lenity and moderation with which they were executed ever since the accession of the present royal family, is certainly a fact which must outweigh, in the minds of all unbiassed persons, any misconceived opinions of the doctrine and tenets of our holy church.

You know that it has always been our constant practice, as ministers of Jesus Christ, to inspire you with the greatest horror for thefts, frauds, murders, and the like abominable crimes, as being contrary to the laws of God and nature, destructive of civil society, condemned by our most holy church; which so far from justifying them on the score of religion, or any other pretext whatsoever, delivers the unrepenting authors of such criminal practices over to Satan.

We are no less zealous than ever in exhorting you to abstain from cursing, swearing, and blaspheming, detestable vices, to which the poor-

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er sort of our people are most unhappily addicted, and which must at one time or other bring down the vengeance of heaven upon you, in some visible punishment, unless you absolutely refrain from them. It is probable that from hence some people have taken occasion to brand us with this infamous calumny, that we need not fear to take false oaths, and consequently to perjure ourselves, as if we believed that any power upon earth could authorise such damnable practices, or grant dispensations for this purpose. How unjust and cruel this charge is, you know by our instructions to you, both in public and private, in which we have ever condemned such doctrines as false and impious. Others, likewise may easily know it from the constant behaviour of numbers of roman catholics, who have given the strongest proofs of their abhorrence to those tenets, by refusing to take oaths, which, however, conducive to their temporal interest, appeared to them entirely repugnant to the principles of their religion.

We must now entreat you, dear christians, to offer up your most fervent prayers to the Almighty God, who holds in his hands the hearts of kings and princes; beseech him to direct the counsels of our rulers, to inspire them with sentiments of moderation and compassion towards us. We ought to be more earnest at this juncture in our supplications to heaven, as some very honourable personages have encouraged us to hope for a mitigation of the penal laws. Pray then the Almighty to give a blessing to these their generous designs, and to aid their counsels in such a manner, that whilst they intend to assist us,

us, like kind benefactors, they may not, contrary to their intentions, by mistaking the means, most irretrievably destroy us.

To conclude, be just in your dealings, sober in your conduct, religious in your practice, avoid riots, quarrels and tumults, and thus you will approve yourselves good citizens, peaceable subjects, and pious christians

Numb. II.

*The HUMBLE ADDRESS of the
Roman Catholic gentlemen, merchants,
and citizens of the city of Dublin, to his
Grace JOHN Duke of BEDFORD, &c.*

[From the Dublin Gazette, December 15, 1759.]

May it please your Grace,

WE his majesty's dutiful and faithful subjects,
the Roman catholic gentlemen, merchants,
and citizens of the city of *Dublin*, do, with the
greatest respect, approach your grace, the illustrious
representative of the best of kings, with our hearty
congratulations on those glorious successes, by sea
and land, which have attended his majesty's arms,
in the prosecution of this just and necessary war.

We gratefully acknowledge the lenity extended
to us by his most sacred majesty, and by his royal
father, of happy memory. Our allegiance, may it
please your grace, is confirmed by affection and gra-
titude; our religion commands it; and it shall be
our invariable rule firmly and inviolably to adhere
to it.

We are called to this duty, at the present time
in particular; when a foreign enemy is meditating
desperate attempts to interrupt the happiness, and
disturb the repose, which these kingdoms have so
long enjoyed, under a monarch, who places his
chief glory in approving himself the common father
of

of all his people: and we sincerely assure your grace, that we are ready and willing, to the utmost of our abilities, to assist in supporting his majesty's government against all hostile attempts whatsoever.

Whenever, my lord, it shall please the almighty, that the legislative power of this realm shall deem the peaceable conduct of his majesty's Roman catholic subjects of Ireland, for many years past, an object worthy of its favourable attention, we humbly hope means may then be devised, to render so numerous a body more useful members to the community, and more strengthening friends to the state, than they could possibly have hitherto been, under the restraint of the many penal laws against them.

We most humbly beseech your grace to represent to his majesty these sentiments and resolutions of his majesty's faithful subjects, the Roman catholics of this metropolis; who sincerely wish, that a peace, honourable to his majesty, and advantageous to his kingdoms, may be the issue of the present war; and that the people of *Ireland* may be long governed by your grace; a viceroy, in whom wisdom, moderation, and justice, are so eminently conspicuous.

Dated this first day of December, 1759 (nine).

His

Numb. III.

*His Grace the Duke of BEDFORD's
answer to the Address of the Roman Ca-
tholics of Dublin, in his Letter to the
Rt. Hon. JOHN PONSONBY, Esq;
Speaker of the Hon. House of Commons.*

[Taken from the Dublin Gazette, Dec. 15, 1759.]

Dublin-Castle, 10th of December, 1759.

S I R,

I Beg the favour of you, to return my most sincere thanks to the gentlemen the Roman catholics of *Dublin*, for the address which you brought me from them this morning, and for the good opinion which they have therein expressed of me.

The zeal and attachment which they profess for his majesty's person and government can never be more seasonably manifested than in the present conjuncture.

It gives me the greatest pleasure to find that they are so fully sensible of the lenity which hath been extended to them, during the whole course of his majesty's reign, and they may be assured, that so long as they conduct themselves with duty and affection to the king, they will not fail to receive his majesty's protection.

I am, with great truth and regard, SIR,

Your most obedient humble servant,

B E D F O R D.

To

Numb. IV.

*To the King's most excellent Majesty.
The humble Address of the Roman Catholics
of the kingdom of Ireland.*

[From the London Gazette, February 7th, 1761.]

Most Gracious Sovereign,

WE your majesty's dutiful and faithful subjects, the Roman Catholics of the kingdom of Ireland, beg leave to approach your majesty with this humble tender of our unfeigned loyalty, on your majesty's happy accession to the throne of your ancestors.

While your majesty's subjects, of all denominations, are now endeavouring to be foremost in the exertion of every duty towards your majesty's person and government; and while all circumstances of affairs at home and abroad, unite for the present happiness and future glory of your reign; permit us to condole with your majesty, and to pour out our sincere sorrow for the loss we have sustained, by the death of a monarch, who hath always approved himself the common father of all his people; a loss, the more sensible on our part, as the repose we have so long enjoyed entirely proceeded from his royal clemency, and the mild administration of his government in this kingdom.

Ever since the accession of your majesty's royal house to the throne of these realms, we have, in a particular

particular manner, experienced the paternal interposition of your illustrious predecessors. We, most gracious sovereign, who are so unfortunately distinguished from the rest of our fellow-subjects, cannot subsist, without a continuance of the royal favour and protection.

Sensible of the same hereditary compassion in your majesty's breast, we most humbly hope for that share in the happiness of your reign, which our peculiar circumstances can admit: And we beg leave to assure your majesty of our grateful and constant return of affection and loyalty; a loyalty, which our conduct has proved, and our religion enforces: happy: might it intitle us to express a wish, that of all your majesty's dutiful subjects of this kingdom, we alone may not be left incapable of promoting the general welfare and prosperity of it.

May the Almighty so influence and direct your counsels, through the whole course of your reign, that they may be ever productive of real happiness to all your people, and may that reign be as memorable for its duration and felicity, as for the greatness and variety of those blessings, which we have already so much reason to expect from it!

Numb. V.

Exhortation of the Roman Catholic clergy read from their altars, Feb. 7, 1762.

[From the Dublin Gazette, Feb. 9, 1762.]

DEAR CHRISTIANS,

AS it is our indispensable duty, so has it been our constant practice, strongly to inculcate the principles of a peaceful, humble, and obedient behaviour. We have done it lately, we do it now again, the more readily because it is expected from us by those powers whom the Almighty has placed over us, of whom St. Paul sayeth, "let all persons be subject to higher powers, for there is no power but from God: obey those who are placed over you." And our blessed Saviour himself, "Give unto Cæsar what belongeth to Cæsar, and unto God what belongeth to God."—Nor have we been wanting to raise in your minds a true sense of gratitude for the lenient hand of government in the execution of several of those penal laws, which particularly distinguish you from your fellow subjects; laws, which however severe in themselves, yet give us an opportunity of feeling with grateful hearts the clemency of his present majesty and his royal ancestors, whose generous indulgence hath, in a great measure, suspended the sharp edge of those laws, made before their accession to the throne of these realms, against a people, who, from their dutiful, inoffensive behaviour, seem to merit

merit a milder fate.——Wherefore, dear christians, urged by duty, gratitude and hope, we earnestly exhort you in the words of St. Paul: “ To make supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings for all men, for kings, and all those who are in high stations, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all piety and chastity.” And as in these days of war and calamity, his excellency the lord Lieutenant and council have thought proper to appoint a general fast on Friday next, we order you to observe the same exactly at this time of humiliation and penance, and that you will offer up your prayers for the spiritual and temporal happiness of his gracious majesty, king George the III^d. and his royal consort, beseeching the Almighty God to assist his councils, to inspire and direct his ministers, that he may be the happy instrument of restoring a solid, lasting, and advantageous peace, and so put a stop to the further effusion of christian blood,——Nor can we without a breach of gratitude, as well as of duty, omit to implore heaven to pour down its blessings on his majesty’s viceroy, our chief governor here, whose noble heart, like that of his royal master, incapable of any partial prejudice, knows no happiness equal to that of rendering all his majesties subjects happy without distinction.

F I N I S.

merit a milder fate. — Wherefore, dear Christians, urged by duty, gratitude and hope, we earnestly exhort you in the words of St. Paul: "To make supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings for all men, for kings, and all those who are in high stations, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all piety and chastity." And as in these days of war and cal-

THE PRINTING of this
Tract on Affairs in Ire-
land, &c. and the benefit ari-
sing from the sale thereof, I
give to Mr. *James Hoey*, jun.
of Parliament-street.

T A A F F E .



